

ber, too, that as a Christian minister he is set for the defence of Gospel truth and purity, and not for their surrender.

An eminent minister was once driven from a church in this State by the majority of that church who refused to sustain his bold preaching against balls and wine frolics, etc. After he left them, their vine was blighted, and no divine blessing attended their worship or their work. At length they recalled him to their pulpit; he preached more pungently than before against worldly conformities, and glorious revivals made that church a "fruitful field." Perhaps this article may fall under the eyes of some worldly-minded church members who are now "badgering" their pastor on account of his faithful advocacy of purity, and nonconformity to the follies of the world. If they are making their pastor's heart ache by the stabs or stings, let them beware lest their own hearts are made to ache by-and-by. If he has a vow upon him to be faithful to conscience and to their eternal interests, they too are under a vow to "receive the word of truth from his mouth with meekness and love," and to "assist his endeavours for your spiritual edification and for the honour of religion among you." Suppose that you heal your minister's heart-ache, and escape a worse one for yourselves, by asking God to forgive you, and to pour out His searching and sanctifying Spirit upon yourselves and your church. Then some hearts will begin to sing for joy.—*Theodore L. Cuyler, in Evangelist.*

THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING.

The pulpit has this advantage over the pews, that it is its office to speak, and its privilege and right to be listened to, while the pews are not expected to talk back, whatever they think. And yet, in this age—which is nothing if not critical, when the traditional reverence which once clung like a perfume to every man who wore a clerical garb has lost much of its force, and when education is the birthright of all—the pews do find a way to set forth their views. That pulpit which aims no higher than to entertain, amuse, and satisfy the audience who sit gazing up to it, fails of its object. Its mission is still the same which Christ gave to His first apostles—Go and teach. To instruct the ignorant, to comfort the sorrowing, to reclaim the erring, to lead the wandering home, to feed the hungry, and to shew the sinner the Saviour, is the appointed work of the Lord's ministers in this weary and stricken world. Most of them honestly and earnestly strive to do it. The heart's desire and daily prayer of the large majority is to be, in deed and in truth, God's ambassadors to men. They yearn to be successful in saving the lost.

But too often the minister lives the week long in a region of abstractions. His studies, which task his intellectual powers, lead him through the maze windings of materialism and the mists of scepticism. He grapples with fierce and sturdy errors, and comes off victorious. Like a giant refreshed with new wine, when Sunday morning arrives he enters the sacred desk, prepared to combat heresies, to strangle objections, and to set up the banner of the Lord triumphant over every foe. His whole being is antagonistic to the adversary he sees before him, and he proceeds with skill, and art, and nice adjustment of phrase, and perfection of logic, first of all, to state the position of error. When he has got error fairly set up and entrenched, so that everybody can see it, he proceeds to batter it down, and he often does it well.

There are two evils, however, which appertain to this sort of preaching: The minister, without at all intending it, and often without in the least suspecting it, suggests doubts to some minds, and starts speculations which might not arise but for his mistake in mentioning them. Bright and ambitious young people resolve that they will taste for themselves some of this poison which seems so delicately sweet to the taste. They read books which they would never have thought of touching, but for the guide-post which their minister set up to shew them thither. Scepticism has had its beginning in many a heart beneath the very shadow of the Lord's temple. The presenta-

tion of error has been stronger than the charm of truth. The mind, already pluming itself in its own conceit, has been flattered at being credited with the knowledge of doubts and difficulties which puzzle and baffle the scholar and the man of science; and it has straightway determined—nor lost time in carrying its purpose into practice—to learn more of the delightful and specious false philosophy of which heretofore it has been in ignorance.

The other evil is, that nine-tenths of the people at church are not doubters at all, never have been, and never will be. They are men and women who are engaged the week long in a stubborn conflict with life and its hardships. They come to the Sunday morning service wearied, worn, storm-beaten, and out of repair; but they come as to a blessed port of peace. They need comfort. They need elevation of the soul. They need divine strength. They want the fountain of hope, and the fulfilment of promise. They ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" and the watchman, out of a heart brimming with love, should be able to answer them, "The morning cometh!" He should shew these men of business that there is One who takes account of their troubles, who knows when they toil hard in the rowing, when they fear the notes will go to protest, when their honour is in peril, when the yawning chasm of bankruptcy opens before them, and when the stealthy temptation lies in wait for them. He should tell these tired mothers that He who slept in mother's arms sees them in the kitchen, in the parlour, and in the nursery. Not the husks of positivism, not the grindings of the scientific mill, should the pulpit bring to feed famishing souls, but the bread of life is what they need. Technicalities are well enough, but there is no meat in them. He who is starving must have food, or he will die.

Another way in which the pulpit misses its aim, is by veiling its message in words too florid, and sentences too involved and rhetorical. But this is a fault which mends with years. It is the common defect of beginners, and they cast it off as they grow into the heart of things, and feel for themselves the difficulties of every day.

"Young man, your sermon was very good, but you held the fodder too high!" was the criticism of an old deacon to the young gentleman who had done his very best one Sunday morning. It is not poetry we object to, nor sentiment, nor flights of lofty imagination, nor daring similes, so that they be not indulged in for mere elocutionary effect. Bombast always defeats itself. The vanity of inflated learning usually finds a ready pin to prick its bubble. But, as a noted literary critic has said, "Though bread be needful, vision is more needed;" and we must have the latter as well as the former. We long to see the King in His beauty, and to behold the land that is very far off. The minister who shews us heaven, and leads us to lift our eyes to its golden splendours and its living waters, helps us to endure and to overcome, though toil be hard and cares oppressive.—*Christian at Work.*

CONGENIAL PEOPLE.

Sympathy is the true social bond. Leaving matters of duty quite one side, why are people not justified in seeking friendly relations with those only who are agreeable to them? Is it any reason for trying to fraternize with people who are temperamentally, intellectually, or spiritually, at opposites with you, because their curbstone happens to join yours, or you choose to go to the same church? We are not considering service—that is always due whenever it is required—but social intimacy and pleasure. About a dozen people out of a thousand are all that can come really near to each other. How to form congenial groups is the much-missed secret of real sociality. Sticks laid cross-wise, the flint and steel, are good in fire-building, but not in the higher kind of house-warming.

If the law of similiarities were more closely followed we should see fewer stupid companies, and have less time-wasting expedients to regret. And it is well to remember that relations are not the only related people. There are brothers after the flesh, and brothers

after
sch
"bl
coll
are

round . . . petty family cares and pleasures absorbs their attention. Their sky is no higher than the family tree, and its branches spread to the rim of their narrow horizon. Their religious, political, and social ties are all "ties of consanguinity." The pattern prayer of selfishness, "Lord bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife—us four and no more," characterizes, perhaps unconsciously, a great many homes. Blood is indeed thicker than water, but sympathy is sometimes stronger and sweeter than genealogy.

The wise Montaigne has said that there are times and matters wherein one should give himself to himself, and only lend himself to society. If he is to give himself to society, he must look for equivalents. All take and no give is a poor rule, but its reverse is apt to be exhausting. Happy are they whose lines have fallen to them in pleasant places,—whose neighbours are truly near, and whose friends are adapted to them! —*Golden Rule.*

THE ENGLISH COFFEE TAVERNS.

It should be borne in mind that the temperance tavern is intended as an attractive rival to the public-house, and that while one of its obvious claims to support may be to assist frugality as well as to wean its customers from strong drink, it is organized primarily for those who now spend their money in that which pauperizes before it kills. Such places are not for the habitual drunkard, though they may eventually help to attract him to join the ranks of the abstainers; nor are they for the penniless, who without pence can find no admission to the drunkard's paradise, even if they desire to enter it. For these other efforts must be made, either by the stern enactments of the law, or preferably, by the gentle ministrations of the gospel. What is needed is to provide a mutual, a pleasant, and a competitive alternative between the fatal temptations to indulge in strong drink, and the depressing influences of monotonous occupations, dreary neighbourhoods, dwellings unworthy of the name of homes.

In what localities may such institutions be made successful? It is perhaps not too much to say that an obviously unsuccessful enterprise of this sort, whether its failures be from want of attractiveness in itself, or in the refreshments provided, or in the manner in which they are served, or from the fact that the locality will not, until it has been educated, supply enough customers, is a direct and serious injury to the cause of temperance. Let there be a few undoubtedly successful establishments of the kind—hardy, bright, clean, cheerful, and with good food and drink—and there will soon be room for more; but every half-hearted attempt to make temperance attractive in a place where the dingy tables scarcely contrast with the dingy walls, where the scraps of food look coarse and uninviting, where the appliances are sordid, the cookery coarse and smeary, the attendants indifferent and unwashed, the whole place wearing the appearance of disappointment and neglect, will only help to repaint the publican's sign-board.—*Castell's Magazine.*

SLAVERY IN NEW ENGLAND.

In the early days of the colony, before the importation of negroes, the Indians were sold as slaves. We quote from a letter to John Winthrop:

"SIR,—Mr. Endecot and myself salute you in the Lord Jesus, etc. Wee have heard of a dividence of women and children [Pequot captives] in the bay, and weuld be glad of a share, viz., a young woman or girl and a boy, if you think good. I wrote to you for some boyes for Bermudas."

In the following letter to the same, written in 1645, a scheme for the slave trade is broached:

"If upon just warre with the Narraganset the Lord should deliver them into our hands, we might easily have men, women and children enough to exchange for Moores, which will be more gainefull pillage for us then wee conceive, for I doe not see how wee can thrive untill wee gett into a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our business, for our children's children will hardly see this great Continent filled with people, soe that our servants will still desire freedome to plant for them selves, and not stay but for very great wages. And I suppose you know verie well how wee shall maynteyne 20 Moores cheaper than one English servant."

The "Connecticut Gazette," during the Revolution contained frequent advertisements for runaway slaves, among them, "very black negro men," branded with scars received in Africa, "Mustee boys," and "Indian women." The time seemed to have been seized upon for a general hegira. The reward offered for their return was seldom more than five dollars.

Dr. Johnson's derisive taunt, that "the loudest yelps for liberty" were heard from a slave-keeping people, seems to us at this day to have been not without its justice.—*Harper's Magazine for December.*